

Message Text

SECRET

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN, PN, NU

1. NICARAGUAN GENERAL ANASTASIO SOMOZA HAS DISCUSSED WITH ME THE SUBSTANCE OF A LETTER WHICH WAS APPARENTLY SENT TO HIM BY PANAMANIAN GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS, BY WAY OF A MUTUAL FRIEND. THE INFORMATION WHICH SOMOZA GAVE ME FROM THE LETTER STATED THAT TORRIJOS HAD DECIDED TO MAKE A \$100,000 CONTRIBUTION TO THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN OF ODUBUR, THE COSTA RICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE.

2. FYI: SOMOZA COMMENTED THAT HE (SOMOZA) WAS MAKING A CONTRIBUTION OF \$50,000 TO ODUBUR'S CAMPAIGN AND \$25,000 TO TORRIJOS'

CAMPAIGN AND \$25,000 TO MARTIN'S. END FYI.

3. ACCORDING TO SOMOZA, TORRIJOS SAID IN THE LETTER THAT THE LATTER HAD REACHED THE FIRM CONCLUSION THAT "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE LEFT", AND TORRIJOS INDICATED THAT HE PLANNED TO SHIFT HIS GOVERNMENT AWAY FROM THE LEFT AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. TORRIJOS ASSURED SOMOZA THAT DESPITE EFFORTS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE BY A NUMBER OF PEOPLE TO CAUSE BAD FEELING BETWEEN TORRIJOS AND SOMOZA BECAUSE THE LATTER DID NOT SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN PANAMA, THAT TORRIJOS HAD COME TO A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF WHY IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOMOZA TO "TAKE SIDES" IN THAT PARTICULAR MEETING IN VIEW OF THE NECESSITY FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE EARTHQUAKE. TORRIJOS

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WANTED TO REASSURE SOMOZA THAT HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD HIS POSITION

AND AGREED WITH HIS JUDGEMENT.

4. TORRIJOS FURTHER SAID, ACCORDING TO SOMOZA, THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO INVEST ALONG WITH SOMOZA FUNDS TO CONSTRUCT A CEMENT PLANT IN COSTA RICA IN VIEW OF THE NEEDS OF THE AREA FOR CEMENT AND QUALITY OF THE CALCIFIED DEPOSITS WHICH WERE AVAILABLE IN COSTA RICA. SOMOZA SAID THAT TORRIJOS HAD STATED IN THE LETTER THAT HE WAS MUCH ENCOURAGED

ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING A VIABLE AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES OVER THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE AFTER HIS GETTING TOGETHER WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER. TORRIJOS, ACCORDING TO SOMOZA, INDICATED THAT HE FELT THAT AMBASSADOR BUNKER HAD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM AND THAT HE, TORRIJOS, HAD REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT MUCH OF THE PROBLEM WAS DUE TO THE "CONFUSION OF PANAMANIAN POLITICIANS" AND THAT HE HAD THEREFORE IN EFFECT, TAKEN THE NEGOTIATIONS OUT OF THE HANDS

OF THESE POLITICIANS AND WAS DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE CANAL ISSUE WITH

ONLY FOREIGN MINISTER TRACK, PRIVY TO HIS THINKING.

5. TORRIJOS APPARENTLY ALSO EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT AS FRIENDLY AS HE WAS INCLINED TOWARD SALVADORAN PRESIDENT MOLINA, HE HAD RELUCTANTLY

REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT PRESIDENT MOLINA WAS MUCH TO BLAME FOR NOT

REACHING AN AGREEMENT WITH GENERAL LOPEZ ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SALVADOR AND HONDURAS BECAUSE OF WHAT TORRIJOS DESCRIBED AS HIS IMPRESSION OF "WEAKNESS" BOTH POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY OF MOLINA'S PERSONAL POSITION. THE ESSENCE OF THE TONE OF THE COMMUNICATION FROM TORRIJOS TO SOMOZA APPEARED TO BE WARM AND CORDIAL AND INDICATIVE OF A DESIRE ON THE PART OF TORRIJOS TO RE-ESTABLISH A WARMTH OF RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMOZA WHICH HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT STRAINED SINCE THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN PANAMA.

SHELTON

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